

## Want to Use Peer Instruction in *Your* Class?

Peer instruction harnesses the power of the students to generate learning. It requires a way to quickly tally responses from students (usually with clickers or from a cell phone/computer. See “Technology” on the [Additional Resources](#) page for clicker website options). However, there are many ways to gather that information that do not require technology. This At-A-Glance will assume the instructor is using clickers or a clicker-function through a cell phone or computer.

Peer Instruction At-A-Glance	
<b>Prep</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Create a series of multiple choice questions about the content.</li><li>● Embed them into the visuals of your presentation or create slides with the questions on them.</li><li>● Ensure each student has a device with clicker capabilities when they enter the classroom.</li></ul>
<b>During</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Display the question to the class.</li><li>● Tally the results.</li><li>● Give students a few minutes to “turn-and-talk” with a neighbor about some aspect of the question and/or answer.</li><li>● Optional: Ask one or two students to share what he/she learned from his/her conversation.</li><li>● Repeat the process to see if the results change.</li></ul>
<b>After</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Collect all clickers from students if students are using school clickers.</li><li>● Use the information from the polling to craft the foci of your next class.</li></ul>

### Prep

Create a series of multiple choice questions about the content.

- They can be interspersed throughout the lecture, or gathered at the beginning or midpoint of your lesson.
- The questions are usually closed-ended. For instance, questions that have the following type of answers:
  - yes/no
  - true/false
  - one right answer out of several options
- Try to make the wrong answers plausible so students have to think about the answer.
- This type of activity can also be used with normative questions that do not have correct answers, but that prompt students to choose a stance from several options.

Embed the questions into the visuals of your presentation or create slides with the questions on them.<sup>1</sup>

- Review the requirements of the technology so you are comfortable with it before using it in the classroom.
- Ensure the questions are legible to everyone in the class.

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<sup>1</sup> Please use your department’s Informational Technology Services if using clickers for the first time.

Ensure each student has a device with clicker capabilities when they enter the classroom.

- If you are using clickers:
  - In some cases, students purchase their own clicker, which they can use in multiple classes.
  - Your school or department might have clickers that students can borrow.
    - In some cases, students borrow a clicker for the entire semester.
    - In other cases, you could distribute clickers to students as they walk into the classroom or have the clickers on students' desks.
- If students are using their smartphones or computers:
  - make sure they are familiar with the website you are using.
  - See “Technology” on the [Additional Resources](#) page for clicker website options.
- For the first time that students use clickers or a polling website, instruct students how to access the clicker questions and have the students try them out before class begins.

### **During**

Display the question to the class.

- Give students time to read the question and reflect before prompting them to answer.
- Be prepared to read the question and choices for students with visual impairment.

Tally the results.

- Let students know when you are going to close the survey.
- The software will add the totals and format them in a graph.
- Depending on your learning objectives, decide whether to reveal the results of the first round of polling.

Give students a few minutes to “turn-and-talk” with a neighbor about some aspect of the question.

- Only allow four to five minutes.
- There are many follow-up questions to choose from, including:
  - asking students to explain why they chose their answer
  - having students convince their partner to change their answer

Optional: Ask one or two students to share what he/she learned from his/her conversation.

- This can be useful to get feedback on students' thinking processes.
- At this stage, consider having students make an argument for one answer or another.

Ask the students to again respond to the poll to see if the results change.

- It is recommended that you reveal the answer after a second round of polling, and then discuss your rationale.

### **After**

Collect clickers from students, if students used clickers provided by the class.

- If you provided clickers to the students, ask students to deposit their clickers as they leave the classroom or have a student(s) collect them.

Use the information from the polling to craft the foci of your next class.

- If there remains major confusion or misunderstanding of the content, you may need to review it during your next class meeting.

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